Doctor *HORNECK*'s

SERMON

Preached before the

King and Queen

At *Whitehal*, *Nov.* 17. 1689.

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THE NATURE OF True Christian Righteousness, IN A SERMON PREACHED before the King and Queen, At *WHITEHAL*, The 17th of *November* 1689.

By ANTHONY HORNECK D. D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to Their MAJESTIES.

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Matth. V. xx.

For I ſay unto you, That except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

A Preface, or Introduction, will be needleſs. It's enough, that theſe Words are part of *Chriſt*'s Famous Sermon on the Mount: The Method, I ſhall obſerve in handling them, ſhall be this following, to Enquire, and Conſider,

I. Who *theſe Scribes and Phariſees were.*

II. What *their Righteouſneſs was*, and *wherein it conſiſted.*

III. How *and in what our Righteouſneſs is to exceed their Righteouſneſs.*

IV. The danger, if we do not, *ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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I. Who theſe *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were.

1. The *Phariſees*. You have often heard of Three Famous Sects among the Jews, when Chriſt appeared in the World, the *Phariſees*, the *Eſſenes*, and the *Sadducees*.

The *Phariſees* were an Order of Men, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves from the Vulgar, by certain Auſterities and Mortifications, and a ſeemingly preciſer way of Living; yet they convers'd, and lived in Cities, and Towns, and were ſo far from avoiding, that they ſeemed to affect Places where there was a great Concourſe of People.

When they began, or, who was the firſt Founder of them, is uncertain; but it's probable, Numb. 6. 2 Jerem. 35. 2. the Inſtitution of the *Nazarites* of old, and the Order of the *Rechabites* afterward, or the ſtrictneſs of the *Haſideans*, might give occaſion to this peculiar way of living, though the Votaries, in progreſs of time, deviated and degenerated from thoſe ſober Patterns; and, as it was with *Monckery* in the Chriſtian Church, improved, or, rather abuſed, the preceding, pious, and well-meant Self-Denials, into Superſtition.

The *Eſſenes* were a kind of Hermits, who choſe to dwell in the Country, as far from Crouds as they could; and, though they had

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Procurators in Cities, and populous Places, to receive, and entertain, those of their Sect, whose Occasions led them to pass that way, yet, their chief abode was in a Wilderness not far from *Jericho*; from whence, as they grew in number, they disper'd themselves, and planted Colonies in other Places. These, were a Modester and Soberer sort of People, and studied Self-Denial too, but to better and greater Purposes than the *Pharisees*; and therefore possibly it is, that *Christ* passes no censure upon them, because, their Service for the most part was reasonable, and in their Morals, they came very near the Christian Institution; and it's likely, that most of them turned Christians afterward, being so well qualified, and προπαίδευσι, prepared for that excellent Discipline; and this might give occasion to *Eusebius*, and others, to think, that the *Essenes*, *Philo* speaks of, were Christian *Ascetick*s. Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 16. 17.

The *Sadducees* were Sensualists, and *Epicureans*, and denied the Being of another World; pretended indeed to keep close to the Letter of the Law of *Moses*, rejected Traditions, and derided the *Pharisees*, who were great Admirers of it; but were Men loose, and profane, debaucht and cruel, a temper agreeable enough to their Principle; which was, That Men die like Beasts,

and that there is no Reſurrection of the Dead, though it muſt be confeſs'd, that theſe Impious Tenets took not much with the common People, the Perſons who eſpouſed theſe Doctrines, being chiefly Men of great Eſtates, and Dignities, who are apt, without very great Circumſpection, from an over-admiration of Things Preſent and Viſible, to be drawn into contempt of Things Inviſible and Eternal.

To return to the *Phariſees*, the Men the Text ſpeaks of; this Order was ſubdivided into Seven Sects, who all obliged themſelves to ſeveral ſorts of Auſterities, too tedious to be told here; and ſo taking, it ſeems, were theſe External Rigors, that there were *Women Phariſees*, as well as *Men Phariſees*.

The Name *Phariſee*, is as much as a *Separatiſt*, for ſo the *Phariſees* were, ſeparating themſelves from the reſt of Mankind, by an affected Piety, which paſſed for great ſtrictneſs in that Age, and gave occaſion to the Apoſtle, to ſay, That before his Converſion, he lived after the ſtricteſt way of the Jewiſh Religion, a *Phariſee*, *Act.* xxvi. 5.

Vide Lightf. in Matth. II 4. 2. The *Scribes*; Theſe were in the Nature of Secretaries, or Clerks, or Publick Notaries to the *Sanhedrin*, or Great Council of the Jews; which Council,

Council, in those Days, consisting of *Sadducees* and *Pharisees*, these Two Factions had their distinct Secretaries, or Notaries, as appears from *Act.* xxiii. 9. The Scribes, or Advocates, who were of the *Pharisees* side, having entirely addicted themselves to their Cause, and Service, were of the same Opinion with the *Pharisees* in all things; stifly maintaining their Doctrines, Principles, and Traditions, and being commonly Men of Learning, were in equal esteem with the *Pharisees*; the rather, because what the *Pharisees* boldly and proudly asserted, the *Scribes* endeavoured to prove from Records, and Monuments of Antiquity, and such Writings, as they judged proper for their purpose: I know some think, they were the Elders of the *Sanhedrin*, and the Chief Expositors of the Law; but if we compare the Account, the Scripture gives of them, with what the *Talmudists* say of them, they seem to have been such Men, as I have described them; nor did their Office, and Learning debar them from being Interpreters of the Law, but qualifie them rather for that Employment. In a word, What the *Canonists* are, and have been of late Years to the *Pope*, the same were the *Scribes* to the *Pharisees*, defending their pretended Rights, and Priviledges, and Authority and Traditions, with all the

Maldon. in c 2. Matt.

the Zeal, and Paſſion, as is common to Men, who deſignedly eſpouſe an Intereſt or Faction; and indeed, one Egg is not liker another, than *Phariſaiſm*, and *Popery* are, as were an eaſie Matter to prove in ſeveral Inſtances, but that I have more material Thing to tell You. Let us go on therefore, and

II. Conſider, *What their Righteouſneſs was, and wherein it conſiſted.*

And to underſtand the Myſtery of it, I ſhall in the firſt place, repreſent to You the Particulars of their Righteouſneſs, as they are Recorded by the Evangeliſts; and then ſhew, wherein it was defective, that we may be the better able to diſtinguiſh, and ſee, how our Righteouſneſs is to exceed theirs.

1. The Particulars of their Righteouſneſs; and they were theſe following. They *gave Alms*, Matth. vi. 2. They *pray'd*, Matth. vi. 5. and *pray'd very long*, Matth. xxiii. 14. They *faſted*, and *when they faſted, disfigured their Faces*, and looked ruefully, *Matth.* vi. 16. They *faſted two days in a week*, Luc. xviii. 12. They *praiſed God, and gave him thanks for his Mercies*, Luc. xviii. 12. They were no ſcandalous Offenders, *Extortioners*, *Unjuſt*, *Adulterers*, Luc. xviii. 11. They

They were very ready to reſolve Caſes of Conſcience, *Matth.* xxiii. 16. They taught the Doctrine, and maintained the Law of *Moſes*, *Matth.* xxiii. 2, 3. They Garniſh'd, Adorned, and Beautified the Sepulchres of the Prophets of old, *Matth.* xxiii. 29. They had a great Veneration for the Traditions of their Church, *Marc.* vii. 2, 3, 4. They were very punctual in paying Tithes, or the tenth part of the Fruits of the Earth, that fell to their ſhare, *Matth.* xxiii. 23. They carried their Phylacteries about with them, whereever they went, which were certain pieces of Parchment, wherein were written ſome Sentences, or Sections of the Law, particularly of *Exod* xii. and xiii. and *Deut.* vi. and xi. and theſe they tied to their Wriſts and Foreheads, and made them very broad, *Matth.* xxiii. 5. They were often Purifying and Waſhing themſelves, not only their Hands and Wriſts, ἄχρι τοῦ ἀγκῶνος, as *Theophylact* ſpeaks, *up to the Elbow*, but their whole Bodies too, eſpecially, when they came from the Market-place, being fearful, leſt ſome filthineſs, contracted by converſe, ſhould ſtick to them, *Mark* vii. 3. They took great pains to make Proſelytes, and Converts to their Religion, for they compaſſed Sea and Land to do it, *Matth.* xxiii. 15. They were ſo ſtrict,

or

or ſo nice rather, that they were afraid of touching a Perſon, who was counted an open, and ſcandalous Sinner; would not only not Eat with him, but not ſo much, as Touch him, which was the reaſon, why the *Phariſee*, in whoſe Houſe Chriſt Dined, found fault with our Saviour, for ſuffering himſelf to be touch'd by a Woman, who had been a notorious Sinner, *Luc.* vii. 39. And this is the account the Scripture gives of them.

St. *Epiphanius* adds, that many of them would Vow very ſtrict Chaſtity, and Abſtinence from the Partners of their Beds, ſome for Four years, ſome for Eight, and ſome for Ten. They were very watchful againſt all Nocturnal Accidents, and partly to prevent them, and partly to awake the ſooner to Prayer, they would Sleep upon Boards not above nine Inches broad, that falling or rolling off from thoſe Boards on the Ground, they might go to their Devotion; ſome would ſtuff their Pillows with Stones and Pebles, and ſome would venture even upon Thorns, for that purpoſe. Beſides their Tythes, they ſeparated their Firſt-Fruits, and the Thirtieth, and Fiftieth part of their Incomes to Pious Uſes; and, as to all Vows, and Sacrifices, no Perſons were more punctual to pay or diſcharge them, than they.

Διὰ τὸ δεῖσθαι μὴ σπερματικόν τι τοῦτο ἢ κλαπῆναι δι' ὀνειράτων ἀνδῆτε ῥύσιν σπερμάτος. Epiph. l. 1. adv. Hær.

Σανίδας σπιθαμῆς μείους τὸ πλάτος. Epiph. Ibid.

This

This was the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*. All this looks well, and hath a very good Gloſs. And one would wonder at firſt ſight, how Chriſt could find fault with theſe Performances. One would think, that in ſtead of blaming, he ſhould have commended them for ſo doing: How many Thouſands are there in the World, that do not do half ſo much in matters of Religion; and ſome would look upon themſelves as extraordinary Saints, if they came up to what the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did, ſo far are they from dreaming of going beyond them.

But have not You ſeen ſome counterfeit Pearls, ſo Artificiouſly contrived, that the ignorant Spectator hath taken them for truly Oriental? Have not you ſeen ſome curious Limner, draw Inſects and Butterflies, with that Life, that one would take them for Living Animals? The ſame may be ſaid of the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*. As ſpecious, as glorious as it look'd, it was perfectly of the Nature of the Glow-Worm, and ſhined bright in that dark Night of Ignorance, but view'd by Day-light was nothing but a ſquallid Worm, a mere *Skeleton* of Devotion; which leads me,

2. To ſhew You the Defects of their Righouſneſs, and they will appear from the following Particulars.

1. They laid the Streſs of their Devotion upon the *Opus Operatum*, the bare Outward Task and Performance, without any regard to the Inward Frame; very indifferent whether their Minds at the ſame time were ſeaſon'd with a due ſenſe of Gods Greatneſs, and their own Imperfections: Juſt as the People of the Church of *Rome* at this Day will ſay ſo many *Credo*'s, ſo many *Pater Noſter*'s, ſo many *Ave Maria*'s, and fancy, they have done admirably well, when they have abſolved their Task, though their Minds, or Thoughts all the while, like the Evil Spirit in *Job*, have been wandring to and fro in the Earth: And I wiſh, too many, who profeſs themſelves Members of the beſt Church in the World, I mean, the Church of *England*, did not ſplit their Veſſel againſt this Rock; I am ſure, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* did: They made no account of the inward Frame, but reſted in the Shell, and thought God would be pleaſed with the ſlaying of a Bullock, or Lamb, or He-Goat; and they meaſured the Goodneſs of their Prayers by their Length and Number more, than by the great Senſe they had of the *Shekinah*, or Divine

Divine Preſence, whereas an humble and devout Mind in the Religious Service, was the thing God required at their Hands, *Matth.* xv. 8.

2. They were very Zealous for the Ceremonial part of Religion, but very reguardleſs of the Moral, and more Subſtantial part of it, hot as *Fire*, for the one, cold as *Ice*, with reſpect to the other. The neglect of a Ceremony, anger'd them more, than the omiſſion of a ſober, and pious Converſation, much as the *Greeks* at this day look upon breaking a Faſt of the Church, as a more heinous Crime, then Killing, or Murthering a Man, and to this purpoſe *Chriſt* tells the *Phariſees*, *Matth.* xxiii. 22, 23. *Wo to you Scribes, and Phariſees, Hypocrites, who ſtrain at a Gnat, and ſwallow a Camel: Ye pay Tithe of Mint, and Cummin, and Aniſe, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy and Faith.*

3. They were abominably ſelfiſh in all their Religious Undertakings, for, all *their Works they do to be ſeen of Men*, ſaith our Saviour, *Matth.* xxiii. 5. This was the Worm that corrupted their Alms, their Prayers, their Faſts, their Self-Denials, their Mortifications, and all they did, even a deſign to advance, and promote their profit, intereſt and credit, and to gain the Applauſes,

and Admirations of Men, and though they made long Prayers, yet it ſeems, it *was to devour Widows Houſes*, Matth. xxiii. 14. Their very Doctrines were ſuited to their Profit and Intereſt, as *Tranſubſtantiation*, *Purgatory*, *Private Maſſes*, *Indulgences*, *Auricular Confeſſion*, *&c.* in the Church of *Rome* are invented to aggrandize the Honour and Profit of the Prieſt, ſo the Tenents, they held, were accommodated to their gain and Lucre, for they taught the People, that there was greater Holineſs in the Gold of the Temple, than in the Temple, and greater Sanctity in the Gift upon the Altar, than in the Altar it ſelf, thereby to oblige the People, to bring Gold, and Gifts into the Temple, whereby the Prieſts, who were of the Order of the *Phariſees*, ſuckt no ſmall advantage, *Matth.* xxiii. 16, 17.

4. They took care to purifie the outward Man, but took none to cleanſe the Heart and the Soul. Such Acts of Piety and Devotion, as were ſtately, and ſavour'd of Pomp, and ſerved to attract the Eyes of Spectators, they were for, and of this Nature were all their External Severities, and Rigors, and Revenges, they uſed upon themſelves. But, as to Mortifying their inward Pride, and Rancour, and Hatred, and Malice,

Malice, and Covetouſneſs, and love of the World, they were ſo great Strangers to it, that they did not think it part of their Religion, which makes *Chriſt* tell them, *Thou blind Phariſee, cleanſe firſt that which is within the Cup and Platter, that the out ſide of them may be clean alſo: Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, for ye are like unto whited Sepulchres, which appear fair unto Men, but within are full of Rotten Bones; even ſo, ye appear outwardly Righteous unto Men, but within, are full of Covetouſneſs,* Matth. xxiii. 26, 27.

5. Though they own'd, profeſſed, and taught the Law of *Moſes*; yet in effect, they preferr'd their wild and phantaſtick Traditions before it: Not to mention their common Proverb, That *the Words of the Scribes, i. e.* of their Traditionary Divines, *were more Lovely than the Words of the Law*, where it was ſo, that the Law, and the Tradition claſht, they Interpreted the Law by the Tradition, not the Tradition by the Law, and hearken'd more to the dictate, and ſuggeſtion of a groundleſs and whimſical Tradition, then to an expreſs Text of the Written Word of God; as is evident from what *Chriſt* tells them, *Matth.* xv. 3. *Why do ye Tranſgreſs the Commandment of God, by your Tradition, for*

דברי סופרים חביבים מדברי תורה.

God

God Commanded, ſaying, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*; *and*, *he that Curſes Father and Mother*, *let him die the Death*; but *ye ſay*, *Whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Father*, *or to his Mother*, though ready to Starve and Periſh, for want of Neceſſaries, *it is Corban*, *it is a Gift*, I have Dedicated it to the Temple, *by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profitted by me*, *and Honour not his Father*, *or his Mother*, *he ſhall be Free. Thus have ye made the Commandment of God of no effect*, *by your Tradition.*

Indeed, where Men invent new Doctrines and Articles of Faith, there the good Old Word of God will do them no Service, but they are forced to make, and run to Traditions, and broken Ciſterns which can hold no Water.

6. To Sum up all. They were very ſevere and ſtrict in keeping ſome Commandments of God, but very ſupine and negligent as to others. They hated Extortion, but were Malicious to a Prodigy; they would not be Drunk, but were abominably Proud; they were for giving Alms to People of their own Sect, but look'd upon it as Sinful, to releive a poor *Samaritan*. They were for ſtrictneſs of Life, before People, and Spectators, but looſe and wicked in Secret, they abhorred Adultery, but were Slaves

to

to Ambition and Vain-Glory: They bound heavy burthens on other Mens Shoulders, but would not touch them with one of their Fingers, and while they preſſed a ſevere obſervance of the Sabbath Day, forgot, they were to reſt from Sin, and Envy, as well, as from ſervile Labour, *Matth.* xii. 12, 13, 14.

Indeed this was one of their pernicious Traditionary Principles, That if a Man or Woman were but induſtrious in the Practice of any one Command of God, though they neglected the other Precepts, that ſervice was ſufficient to entitle them to a חלק בעולם הבא to the Portion of the Bleſſed in another World. To be ſhort, they ſerved God at the beſt, by halves, were quick-ſighted as Eagles, in ſpying out other Mens faults; but blind as Moles in diſcovering their own, and while they divided their Affections, betwixt God and the World, allow'd the World the far greater ſhare.

Theſe were the Diſtempers and Diſeaſes of the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and how we are to exceed them, is the third particular, I am to ſpeak to.

III. *Except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees*; and how,

how, or, in what Things we are to exceed them, is ſoon gueſs'd at; for 'tis evident from the preceding Diſcourſe, that it muſt be in Sincerity, in Simplicity, in Humility, in Charity, and in Univerſality of Obedience.

1. In *Sincerity*, in being that within, which we ſeem to be without. *Chriſt* is not againſt external Devotion, hath no diſlike of an outward Profeſſion, never declared againſt decent external Ceremonies; but he requires, we ſhonld be Devout and Serious within, as well as without, and take care that what we do without, do ariſe from a ſenſe of God within; and that a relliſh of Spiritual Things in the Soul within, do put us upon Devotion without; that the Heart and the Lips, and the Hands, be all of a piece; and moreover, that we uſe the ſame diligence to Mortifie our inward Luſts, which we uſe to reſtrain our ſelves from evil Actions in Company, or, in the preſence of Men. In a Word, that we do not only pretend to Religion, but Practice it; not only talk and diſpute, and entertain our ſelves with Speculations, and Diſcourſes of it, but Live up to the Holy Rules of it; not only make Profeſſion of it, but ſhew *out of a good Converſation, our good Works with Meekneſs of Wiſdom*, as it is ſaid, *Jam.* iii. 13.

2. In *Simplicity*, and having pure and holy Ends in our Religious Actions, and particularly in our Religious Severities, and Self-Denials, ends ſuitable to the Holineſs of God, and the Edification of our Neighbours; in a word, ends Rational, and ſuch as may be juſtified before God and Man. This is part of the ſingle Eye, we read of, *Matth.* vi. 22. Indeed, the Ends and Deſigns of Actions, make a ſtrange alteration in their Worth and Value, render them either Good or Bad, either Commendable or Abominable, either *Sacrifices of Righteouſneſs*, or, *Sacrifices of Fools*. Chriſt is ſo far from diſcouraging his Followers from Religious Self-Denials and Severities, that his Doctrine and Diſcipline preſſes nothing more, inſomuch, that the greater Your Self-Denials are, the better Chriſtians You are. But, the right end, is the thing our Maſter preſſes, and inſiſts upon. Faſt and Pray, and continue in Prayer a long time, ſpend whole hours in it, if Your Strength, and Senſe, and Affections will ſerve; give Alms, and give very liberally; deny Your ſelves in a Thouſand Vanities, the World doats upon; Mortifie Your Bodies in a decent manner, but take heed of ſecret hopes of Meriting by all this, and of ſecret Deſigns, either to promote Your Worldly Profit and Intereſt, or,

to gain the Commendations and Admiration of Your Neighbours, or, to make God amends for ſome Sins, You are loath to part withal. Have no Worldly Ends in all this, but let a Senſe of Your Duty, and Your Gratitude to God, and and an earneſt deſire to Crucifie the Fleſh, to die to the World, to imitate the Saints of Old, to encourage Your ſelves in a Spiritual Life, and to prepare for Heaven and Happineſs. Let theſe be the Principles and Motives that put You upon all this, and You will undoubtedly exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*.

3. In *Humility*; not only in having a juſt Senſe of our Errors, and many Infirmities, which render us unworthy to appear before God, without the Aſſiſtance and Interceſſion of a Mediator; not only in abhorring our ſelves for thoſe many defects, which cleave to our beſt Services, not only in accuſing our ſelves before the All-ſeeing Eye, as Wretched, Naked, Poor, Blind and Miſerable, from a Senſe of his Infinite Majeſty and Purity, but alſo in having low and humble Thoughts of our Religious Performances, acknowledging that by the Grace of God, we are what we are, and that by the Influence of that Grace, thoſe Performances are wrought, and confeſſing

ſelling from the Heart, when we have done all that we are Commanded to do, that *we are unprofitable Servants, and have done no more, then what was our Duty to do.* This humble Temper the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were very great ſtrangers to, who look'd upon their Religious Services, as Things which God was obliged in Honour, and Equity to look upon and Reward; Pride, Self-Conceitedneſs, and Self-Admiration, mingling with almoſt all they did; and they did not, would not know, what a contrite and humble Heart meant, and what it was to lie low before God, with a deep Senſe of their Un-worthineſs, and of the great Imperfection of their Services; and though they Faſted often, yet that was not ſo much to arrive to an humble Senſe of their Corruptions and Infirmities, as to increaſe their Merits, and to do Things which might Challenge Gods kinder Inclinations; and this was the Rock againſt which theſe Men ſtumbled: And, as they were unacquainted with true Humility toward God, ſo they underſtood not, what it was to condeſcend to Men of low Eſtate. In Humility therefore we are to exceed them; in Humility toward God and Man; for, as there is nothing that ſeparates more betwixt the Creator, and the Creature, than Pride and Self-Conceited- Luk 17.10.

Conceitedneſs, for which reaſon, God is ſaid *to behold the Proud afar off*, ſo nothing unites Heaven and Earth, God and the Soul, more than Humility; for thus *ſaith the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, I dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him alſo, that is of a contrite, and humble Spirit*, Eſ. lvii. 15.

4. In *Charity*, or, a compaſſionate Temper toward all ſorts of diſtreſſed Perſons, I ſay, all ſorts, for that of the *Phariſees* was narrow and ſneaking, and confined to People of their own Sect. I need not tell you, that Charity conſiſts not only in giving Alms, that's but one part of it; nay, it may happen ſo, that it may not be ſo much, as a part of it, according to the caſe St. *Paul* puts, 1 *Cor* xiii. 3. where he makes it poſſible, for a Man to beſtow all his Goods to Feed the Poor, and yet to have no Charity. Had Almſgiving been all the Charity, that was neceſſary to Salvation, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had been conſiderable Men, for they were free and liberal enough of their Purſes toward Men of their own Party; but Charity is a larger and nobler Virtue; if it be of the true Eagle-kind, an unfeigned Love of God is the cauſe of it, and the effect is ever anſwerable to the Beauty which produces it. St. *Paul* hath given ſo genuine

nuine a Character of it, 1 *Cor.* xiii. that it's impoſſible to miſtake the Nature of it, except Men be willfully Blind. It extends its Arms not only to all ſorts of Objects, whether Friends or Foes, whether Relations or Strangers, but as far as its Ability reaches, and opportunity offers it ſelf to all ſorts of Diſtreſſes: It doth not only Feed and give Drink, and Cloath and Viſit, but Admoniſh too, and Reprove, and Teach, and Entreat, and Counſel and Adviſe, and help and aſſiſt, and ſometimes Correct and Puniſh. It embraces Enemies, and like the wounded Earth, receives even thoſe that cut, and digg'd it, into its Boſom; and like the kind Balſom Tree, heals thoſe, that made Inciſions upon it. It Judges favourably of Pious Heathens, much more of Pious Chriſtians, though differing from it in Opinion; it Damns none, whom God hath not Damned; in a word, it works no Evil to its Neighbour, but is ready unto every good Word and Work. And in this Charity, we are to exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*.

5. In *Univerſality of Obedience*; or, in making Conſcience of the ſeveral Commands of the Goſpel, of one, as well as of another. Then, we exceed them, without any danger of being over much Righteous, when at the ſame time, that Joh. 15. 14.

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we are fervent for Circumſtances in Gods Worſhip, we are not forgetful of the ſubſtantial part of Religion, when we do not let our Publick Devotion juſtle out our private, nor the private the publick; when we do not make the Practice of one Precept, an argument to juſtifie our neglect of another, nor excuſe our not doing Good, by our not committing of Evil, but are impartial in our Obedience, and cheerfully ſubmit, not only to the gentler, but harder Injunctions of the Goſpel, not only to ſuch as are agreeable, but to thoſe alſo, which are contrary to our natural Temper and Inclination.

The Pious Chriſtian will not eaſily get the better of the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, except his Obedience becomes larger, and ſpreads more than theirs. Had theſe Men carried on their Obedience to that Extent, I ſpeak of, as St. *Paul*, a *Phariſee*, and the Son of a *Phariſee* afterward did, there would not have been greater Men in the World then they; and the *Proverb*, which was unjuſtly made concerning them, would not have been altogether Falſe, *viz. If there were but two Men to be Saved, the one would be a* Scribe, *the other a* Phariſee.

And theſe are the particulars in which our Righteouſneſs is to exceed that of the *Scribes* and

and *Phariſees*. If it doth not, we ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. The *Danger*, and the *Laſt Part*, which will deſerve our Examination.

IV. The *Danger*. *Except Your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes, and Phariſees, Ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

This *Word*, one would think, ſhould rouze every Soul here preſent, and put us all upon a ſerious Inquiry, Whether our Righteouſneſs doth actually exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*: If it doth not, we hear our Doom. And can any Man think, Chriſt was very ſerious in ſaying ſo, without being concerned, how to prevent, and eſcape that fatal *Exit*? All Ye, that have any Care of your Salvation, and beleive another World, and know, what the Terrors of the Lord mean, and what it is, not to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; Awake, awake, (why ſhould you not, when Your Great Redeemer calls?) and take this Threatning into ſerious Conſideration. Either it will be fulfilled, or not: If it will not be fulfilled, where is Chriſt's Veracity? If it be, where is Your Security?

I ſay unto You; Thus the Commination begins; which ſhews, the Thing is firm, and like the Laws of *Medes* and *Perſians*, unalterable. Our Maſter, even He whom we believe to be God, as well as Man, hath ſpoke the Word. He that is Truth it ſelf, hath ſaid it, and thus it muſt be, nor will all the Intreaties of Men and Angels oblige him to depart from his peremptory Declaration.

You that hear, and now read all this, cannot pretend Ignorance, that you did not know the dreadful Conſequence of this Neglect. We ſuggeſt, we intimate ſo much to you; we pull you by the Sleeve, we proclaim theſe Words in your Ears, as poor, as mean, as inconſiderable Creatures, as we are; I would to God, they might ſink into your Hearts! We beg of You, to lay aſide your Divertiſements, and your Buſineſſes for a while, and allow this Threatning ſome Attention of Mind.

If you go no farther in your Righteouſneſs, than theſe unhappy Men did, not all your Cries at laſt, *Lord, Lord, open to us*; Not all your Tears, and Calls, *Lord, have Mercy upon us!* Not all your Arguings, and Pleadings with God; Not all your Dying Groans, not all your Mournful Accents, will open the Kingdom of Heaven to you.

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If you go no farther than theſe Men, by this Rule of Chriſt, you muſt inevitably be Miſerable, and all your Wealth and Grandeur and Eſtates and Relatives, cannot help you: If you go no farther, you ſink into a State of Hypocriſie, and I need not tell you, that the Portion of Hypocrites, is a very ſad Portion, for it is to *be caſt into outward Darkneſs, where there is Howling and Gnaſhing of Teeth*, ſo ſaith your Maſter and mine, *Matth.* xxiv. 51.

In ſpeaking to You, I ſpeak to Chriſtians, *even to Men*, who believe, that to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, is beyond all the Bliſs, that this, or Ten Thouſand Worlds do afford; and, that not to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, is to be Wretched and Miſerable, Odious and Contemptible, beyond Expreſſion, and to Groan in Torments to Eternal Ages: This is the Notion You have of theſe Things, as You own Your ſelves Chriſtians. Men, Fathers and Brethren, Do you believe the Prophets? Do you believe the Apoſtles? Do you believe the Son of God, that came into the World to ſave Sinners? I know you believe, and ſurely this is Motive ſufficient to ſuffer the Word of Exhortation

If therefore any of you have hitherto laid the ſtreſs of your Devotion, upon the External Task,

and been Strangers to the inward frame of Mind, which is in the ſight of God of great Price: If you have been Zealous for ſmall, little, inconſiderable Things in Matters of Religion, and have wilfully neglected the more Subſtantial and Self-Denying part of it: If you have been Selfiſh in your Acts of Piety and Righteouſneſs, and been Devout and Good, for Wordly Ends more than from a Senſe of your Duty: If you have taken ſome care to Purifie your outward Man, from Clamorous and Scandalous Sins, and have been careleſs of rectifying what is amiſs within you, even of ſubduing that immoderate Love of the World, and Pride, and Revengefull Thoughts and Deſires, and Anger, and wrathful Temper, and other ſecret Sins, which do ſo eaſily beſet you: If you have thought it your Duty, to obſerve ſome of the greater Commandments of the Goſpel, and made no Conſcience of the leſſer. All this *Fabrick* muſt be pulled down, undone and unravell'd, and you muſt turn over a new Leaf, and apply your ſelves to a true Goſpel Life and Temper; elſe, there is no entring into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Flatter not your ſelves with the Merits and Sufferings, and Death of Chriſt Jeſus, for poor Sinners. I grant, I own, this is a very Glori-

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ous, and comfortable Truth, and there is no ſincere Beleiver, but confeſſes to thy Praiſe and Glory, O Bleſſed Jeſu! That there is no Name under Heaven given, whereby Men may be Saved, but thine alone. But ſtill it is this exceeding the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* in their Righteouſneſs, that muſt give you a Title to the beneſits of the Death of Jeſus Chriſt: By this the Pardon of your Sins, which was purchaſed by that Death, muſt be ſued out, and applied, and rendred comfortable to your Souls; and, if the Death of Chriſt doth not kil. in you that Hypocriſie and Partiality, which made the Righteouſneſs of the *Phariſees* defective, that Death cannot, will not, profit you.

All the Chriſtian World knows, that the deſign of Chriſt's dying for Sinners, was, *That they which Live, ſhould not henceforth Live unto themſelvesbut unto him,that Died for them,and roſe again.* They are the expreſs Words of the Holy Ghoſt, 2 *Cor.* v. 15. and it is as certain, that you cannot Live unto him, that Died for you, except your Righteouſneſs be a Righteouſneſs without Guile, and therefore beyond *that* of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees.*

I ſuppoſe you are ſenſible, that Chriſt cannot contradict himſelf; when he ſpake theſe Words, He knew he was to Die for Sinners, yet to theſe Sinners, for whom he was to Die, he proteſts, *Except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed, &c.* And therefore certainly, the Mercies of his Death cannot claſh with our Duty; and whoever means to enjoy the benefits of that Death, muſt Die to the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and a Righteouſneſs more Rational, an Evangelical Righteouſneſs muſt Live in him, even that which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, *Phil.* iii 9. And that's the Life of God, as it is called, *Epheſ.* iv. 18.

If we are to exceed theſe Men in their Righteouſneſs, we muſt do more than they did and if we do more, can we do leſs, than what hath been hinted in the preceding Particulars of *Sincerity*, *Simplicity*, *Humility*, *Charity*, and *Univerſality of Obedience*? for theſe Qualifications rectifie what was amiſs in the Righteouſneſs of theſe Men, and ſet us in the right way, from which thoſe Self-Conceited Men deviated, and wandred in a Wilderneſs of Vulgar Errours.

Should any of you be ſo Unfortunate, (what I ſay here, is nothing but a plain and eaſie Comment upon the Commination of the Text) I ſay, ſhould any of you be ſo unfortunate, as to come before

before the Gate of the Kingdom of Heaven, and be denied entrance there; how like a Thunderbolt would this ſtrike you! and yet I ſee not, how it is poſſible to prevent it, if theſe Words of Chriſt make no impreſſion upon you, or do not oblige you to go beyond theſe Men in their Acts of Devotion and Piety.

Their Righteouſneſs was an External, Mechanical, ſtarcht kind of Righteouſneſs; it was not Free, not Natural, and they took no care to reform their Thoughts, Deſires, Luſts, Affections, and ſuch Things as Human Laws take no notice of; and it's to be feared, that this is the Diſeaſe of too great a number of Chriſtians: Nay, Thouſands there are, which do not come up to ſo much, as the Negative Virtues of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*: They were no Drunkards, no Swearers, no Whoremongers, no Adulterers, and yet, how many that profeſs themſelves Illuminated by the Goſpel of Chriſt, are ſo, and worſe than ſo? and if even thoſe, who do not exceed the Righteouſneſs of theſe Men, ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, how ſhall thoſe, that are not ſo good as they? And but that Unbelief, and Stupidity reigns ſo much in the Hearts of Men, certainly here is enough to fright them from the Carnal Life they lead.

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There ſtands before the Gate of the Kingdom of Heaven, an Angel with a Flaming Sword, as much, as there did before the Gate of Paradiſe, to keep out all thoſe, who voluntarily chuſe Death before Life, and do not you chuſe Death before Life, when you had rather forfeit your ſhare in the Kingdom of Heaven, then exceed the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* in their Righteouſneſs?

Surely it muſt be a diſmal and deplorable Condition, when Men have flattered themſelves all their Life time, with hopes of entring into the Kingdom of Heaven, to find themſelves at laſt thruſt out, and may not this be the condition of ſome of you? And is not the very poſſibility of it enough to oblige you to Purifie and Cleanſe your Righteouſneſs, and to take care, that none of the Leven of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſtick to it?

Here on Earth, Men Fight for a great Eſtate, and venture Fortune, Friends, Intereſt, Honeſty, Life, and all: Strange! The Kingdom of Heaven ſhould lie under that Misfortune, that Men muſt be entreated to enter into it, and yet will not be prevailed with after all to enter. Yes, you'll ſay, we all are very ready to enter into it, were it not for the hard Conditions that are required; and do you really think the Conditions

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ſo hard? Would you think them ſo, if you lay Howling in Eternal Flames? Certainly, nothing would ſeem hard then, and why ſhould it ſeem ſo now, when it is evident and apparent, you are in danger of thoſe Flames?

Behold! God is ready and willing, to ſuccour, to aſſiſt, to ſupport, and to ſtrengthen you, that your Righteouſneſs may Triumph over the Righteouſneſs of theſe Hypocrites. The ſame Spirit, the ſame Grace, the ſame Influences, the ſame Aſſiſtances, he hath afforded to St. *Paul*, to St. *Peter*, to *Lydia*, to *Martha*, to *Mary*, to *Magdalene*, to the Jaylour, to the Penitent Publican, to *Zachæus*, to others, the ſame he offers to you all. But then, if theſe kind offers be ſlighted and rejected, and a *Farm*, a *Yoak of Oxen*, or ſome thing worſe be preferr'd before it, it is not God ſo much, that deprives you of the Kingdom of Heaven, as you your ſelves. Were you actually poſſeſs'd of this Kingdom of Heaven, you would wonder at the Folly and Madneſs of Men, who can complain, that the Conditions are hard, when ſuch a Glory, ſuch a Bliſs, ſuch a Kingdom is to be had, a Kingdom for which the Apoſtles, and the Primitive Beleivers, whoſe Faith, and Conſtancy, we Admire, forſook Father and Mother, and Lands, and Houſes, and all that was dear to them in this World.

World. I could give you ſuch a Deſcription of that Kingdom, as ſhould make all the Glories of this World look pale, and dim, and dark, in Compariſon of it: But I forbear.

Were ſuch Conſiderations as theſe, made uſe of in the cool of the Day, I mean, when your Thoughts are cool and compoſed, and the Grace of God upon your Endeavours, earneſtly implored, they would inſpire you with Courage Invincible, to go not only beyoud Heathens and Philoſophers, but beyond *Scribes* and *Phariſees* in Righteouſneſs, and in the ſerious Exerciſes of Virtue and Self-Denial.

It's poſſible, you may not remember all the Motives, I have given you, but one thing you will be able to Remember, which contains all that I have ſaid, and that's the Text, and therefore I repeat it once more, *Except your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

FINIS.